

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BAR-BENCH-MEDIA CONFERENCE

A meeting of the Bench-Bar-Media Conference was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2002 at 12:30 p.m. in the Supreme Court Conference Room in Wilmington. The meeting was open to the public. Notice of the meeting had been posted. The members of the Conference in attendance were:

Members from the Print News Media

Rita Farrell  
Dennis Forney  
Mike Pelrine  
Calvin Stovall  
John Taylor

Members from the Electronic News Media

Johnnie Braxton  
Chris Carl  
Marie Krips

Members from the Bench

Chief Justice E. Norman Veasey  
Vice Chancellor Jack B. Jacobs  
President Judge Henry duPont Ridgely  
Judge John K. Welch

Members from the Bar

David G. Culley, Esquire  
Richard D. Kirk, Esquire  
F. Michael Parkowski, Esquire

The first agenda item was the approval of the draft minutes from the December 10, 2001 meeting of the Conference. Upon motion which was duly seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved without amendment.

Dick Kirk gave the Conference a status report on the drafting of the Conference Constitution. Dick did not receive any comments from Conference members on the Constitution handout distributed at the December meeting. He suggested that the Constitution Subcommittee meet and circulate its recommendations to the Conference prior to the April meeting. Dick welcomed any comments that Conference members had on the proposed Constitution.

In a related matter, President Judge Ridgely reminded the Conference that the Conference's name had fluctuated over the years from Bench-Bar-Press to Bench-Bar-Media to Bar-Bench-Media. The names have become interchangeable. A motion was made to name the Conference as the Bar-Bench-Media Conference. The motion was passed unanimously.

The Conference discussed the topic of sponsoring a seminar on the Internet. It was noted that this seminar had been scheduled years ago but did not go forward because of a lack of advanced notification to members of the Bar and a lack of people registering to attend the seminar. A copy of the seminar brochure was distributed to the Conference. John Taylor agreed to co-chair an Internet Seminar Subcommittee with Dick Kirk as the chair. David Culley and Mike Pelrine volunteered to join the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will outline the content of the seminar, identify proposed speakers and suggest a seminar date for review at the next meeting. They will contact Richard Herrmann about designing the seminar. The seminar needs to be

sufficiently attractive and contain an ethics component for lawyers to generate revenue for the seminar expenses. It was agreed that the seminar should acknowledge current Internet services offered by the courts such as CLAD e-filing, submission of CD-ROM briefs and individual court web sites. Access issues to electronic filings by the media and the public should be included in the seminar. Conference members were encouraged to provide the Subcommittee with any ideas for the Internet seminar or topics for other seminars. The Conference briefly discussed the establishment of a Seminar Subcommittee without resolution.

The Conference discussed the issue of expanded media coverage of trial court proceedings. The Conference's 1994 proposal to the Supreme Court had been circulated to the Conference prior to the meeting. The Supreme Court had not acted upon the original submission. The Conference noted that the initial work of the Conference on the proposal, after surveying media access rules in other jurisdictions, was extensive. It was proposed that the Conference refile its original proposal for the Supreme Court's consideration. A lengthy discussion ensued on whether the Conference should be proposing the expansion of media coverage as well as the upside and downside of expanded access. By motion, the Conference decided that it wanted to receive updated information on the expanding media coverage issue prior to the next meeting. All Conference members were invited to submit any relevant information on the expansion of media coverage in the trial courts to Steve Taylor by

March 21, 2002 for circulation to the Conference. President Judge Ridgley volunteered to update the experiences of other jurisdiction.

The Conference approved the proposed Independence of the Judiciary and Freedom of the Press Essay Contest for high school students. President Judge Ridgely will issue a press release to the schools, and the contest will be posted on the Conference web site. Winners will be announced with a ceremony on Law Day. The Supreme Court will provide the cash awards, and the winners will be awarded media internships to be served when school is not in session in the summer months. Vice Chancellor Jacobs has made arrangements for the winning essays to be published in The Delaware Lawyer. The winning essays will also be printed in various State newspapers.

The agenda items concerning a proposed Bar-Bench-Media Conference dinner and Press Days were deferred until April and September respectively.

The Conference approved the design and content of the Bar-Bench-Media Conference web site as proposed at the December meeting. The press release announcing the essay contest will be added to the web site. The previous Conference name on the site will have to be removed and changed to the approved Conference name.

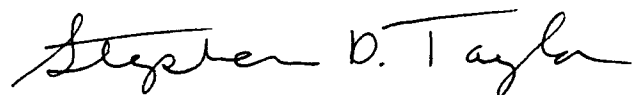
The next agenda item concerned the electronic filing of documents, focusing on Bankruptcy Court, which was placed on the agenda at the request of Rita Farrell. Rita

indicated that documents on line increased their availability in theory. However, access required a payment of \$.07 a page and the need for financial account with the court. Only three public terminals are currently available at Bankruptcy Court for public use. Rita noted that reporters needed hard copies with date stamps at times, not all documents are scanned into the system and printouts are slow. She also suggested that courts should waive payment fees for copies of documents requested by the media. Rita said she would reduce her concerns and thoughts to writing for submission to the Conference.

The next meeting of the Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, April 16, 2002 from 12:30 - 2:00 in the Supreme Court Conference Room, Carvel State Office Building 11th floor, 820 North French Street, Wilmington, DE. Lunch will be provided. If any member of the Conference wishes to attend the meeting by the use of videoconferencing facilities, please contact Steve Taylor at 302-577-8742.

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Stephen D. Taylor". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Stephen D. Taylor".

March 5, 2002